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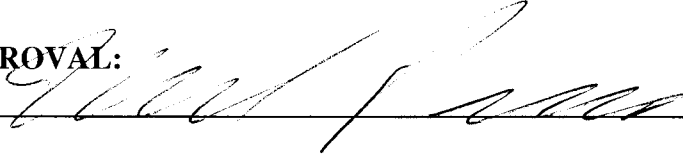
DATE: November 1, 2007

TO: Energy and Environment Committee

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SUBJECT: Environmental Components of 2008 RTP

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL:



RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Recommend inclusion of the conformity findings and Environmental Justice analysis in the Draft 2008 Regional Transportation Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Three items relative to the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) are in the purview of the EEC: transportation conformity, environmental justice, and the environmental impact report.

Transportation Conformity

Transportation conformity is required under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) to ensure that federally supported highway and transit project activities are consistent with ("conform to") the purpose of the State Implementation Plan (SIP)¹. Conformity to the purpose of the SIP means that transportation activities will not cause new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of the relevant National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Conformity applies to areas that are designated non-attainment, and those re-designated to attainment after 1990 ("maintenance areas") for the following transportation-related criteria pollutants: ozone, particulate matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀), carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

The boundaries of the federal non-attainment/maintenance areas in the SCAG region are:

- *Ventura County Portion of the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB)* - The entire county is a non-attainment area for 8-hour ozone
- *South Coast Air Basin (SCAB)* - The entire basin is a non-attainment for PM_{2.5} and 8-hour ozone, and a maintenance area for NO₂, CO, and PM₁₀.
- *Antelope Valley and Victor Valley portions of Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB)* - Non-attainment areas for 8-hour Ozone
- *San Bernardino County Portion of MDAB* -
 - Searles Valley (situated in the NW part of the county) is non-attainment for PM₁₀
 - San Bernardino County (excluding the Searles Valley area) within the MDAB is a non-attainment area for PM₁₀

¹ To comply with the CAA in achieving the NAAQS, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) develops SIPs for federal non-attainment and maintenance areas. In California, SIP development is a joint effort of the local air agencies and ARB working with federal, state, and local agencies (including the MPOs). Local Air Quality Management Plans (AQMPs) are prepared in response to federal and state requirements.

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- *Riverside County Portion of Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB)* - The entire Riverside County portion of SSAB (Coachella Valley) is a non-attainment area for PM10 and 8-hour ozone
- *Imperial County Portion of SSAB* - The entire Imperial County portion of SSAB is designated as non-attainment for 8-hour ozone and PM10.

The 2008 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) must pass the following four tests and analyses to meet the requirements for a positive conformity finding:

Regional Emissions Analysis: Regional emissions analyses, by non-attainment area and by pollutant, compare on-road emissions to the applicable on-road emissions budgets in the SIPs for the SCAG Region. The applicable emissions budgets are those approved and found to be adequate for conformity determination by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In the absence of applicable emissions budgets, the regional emission tests for conformity finding are based on either a build/no-build or less than base year scenario. In the SCAG region, build/no build tests are performed for PM10 in the San Bernardino County portion of the MDAB and for PM10 and ozone in the Imperial County portion of the SSAB. There are emission budgets for all other non-attainment areas in the SCAG region.

Timely Implementation of TCMs Analysis: This conformity test requires all Transportation Control Measures (TCM) projects subject to reporting to be fully funded and on schedule. TCMS are projects which reduce congestion and improve air quality. In the SCAG Region, there are two non-attainment areas which contain TCMs: the ozone AQMPs/SIPs for the SCAB and for the Ventura County portion of SCCAB.

SCAG works with the CTCs of these areas to ensure TCMs are on schedule or that steps are being overtaken to overcome obstacles.

Financial Constraint Analysis: The 2008 RTP is financially constrained and is financed by federal, State, and local sources.

Interagency Consultation and Public Involvement: Throughout its development, the 2008 RTP has been discussed at meetings of various policy committees, working groups (including the Transportation Conformity Working Group), task forces, and technical advisory committees.

The Draft RTP will contain a discussion on conformity along with preliminary results based on information known at this time. Staff will keep the Committee apprised of conformity findings as budgets are finalized and as the projects included in the RTP are brought into final form.

Environmental Justice

As a government agency that receives federal funding, SCAG is responsible for implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and conforming to federal environmental justice (EJ) principles, policies, and regulations. SCAG conducts public outreach and solicits public participation in the development of its plans, programs, and policies. This participation helps to assure that the public has a voice in regional planning decisions.

On September 19, 2007, SCAG held the first Environmental Justice Workshop for the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) at the main office in downtown Los Angeles, with videoconferencing available at the Inland office. The intent of the Workshop was threefold: 1) present general information on SCAG's EJ Program; 2) review the previous EJ analysis in the 2004 RTP; and 3) obtain input from the public on the EJ analysis for the 2008 RTP. There were approximately 20 participants in attendance representing various stakeholder groups, which included non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, neighborhood coalitions, environmental and public health organizations, industry, business owners, and other interested parties. The

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comments received will be recorded, considered, and written responses prepared in the EJ analysis for the 2008 RTP.

SCAG's EJ analysis has two major components. The first component involves analyzing the distribution of environmental impacts on various socioeconomic variables. These socioeconomic variables included ethnicity, income, and poverty level.

A central component of long-range plan development is measuring how well the plan is able to achieve the goals of a community. The second component examines performance measures to determine any disproportionate negative impacts. Performance Measures provide a way to quantitatively assess the impact of the RTP. In the development of the RTP, SCAG utilized a number of performance measures designed to assess overall equity. These include the following:

- *Accessibility* - How easily people can reach destinations, such as work, school, shopping, and other essential services. In this analysis, accessibility measures included: 1) Employment and 2) Services.
- *Cost* - Costs is evaluated by examining the taxes – sales, gasoline, and income – that fund most transportation expenditures, and how these tax burdens fall on various populations.
- *Environmental Impact Analyses* - Air quality and noise impacts.
- *Plan Expenditures/Investments* - Expenditure distribution for various modes of travel (highways, urban rail, commuter rail, and bus).
- *Travel Distance Reductions* - Benefits relative to reductions in person-miles traveled (driving distance savings).
- *Time Savings* - Distribution of travel time savings (average travel time for all trip purposes).

Additionally, SCAG is undertaking analysis of new components in the 2008 RTP. This includes non-work trips travel time and investigation of impacts/travel behaviors by gender and age.

SCAG's performance indicators reflect a broad set of goals and objectives put forward for the region and its transportation system. The intention of the EJ analysis is to demonstrate that SCAG's planning processes and methods are responsive to imbalances caused by the development of the plans, programs, and policies in the 2008 RTP.

Environmental Impact Report

The Draft EIR for the 2008 RTP and the 2008 Regional Comprehensive Plan is being prepared. The EEC will be kept apprised of its status and will receive the draft document upon its completion.


FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff support for air quality planning and policy is covered under the Air Quality and Conformity staff work elements included in the current year overall work program (08-025.SCGS1 and 08-020.SCGS1).


Staff support for Environmental Justice and EIR work is covered under Environmental Planning staff work element included in the current year overall work program (08-020.SCGS1).

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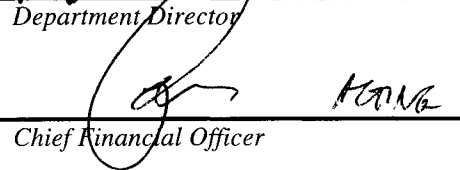
Reviewed by:


Division Manager

Reviewed by:


Department Director

Reviewed by:


Chief Financial Officer